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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Note verbale dated 11 October 1993 from the Permanent Representative of the Marshall Islands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Marshall Islands to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of South Pacific Forum Member States who are Member States of the United Nations (SOPAC), has the honour to submit herewith the document entitled "Port Vila Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development" agreed upon at Port Vila on 10 September 1993.

The Declaration has been prepared as part of the Pacific region's intergovernmental preparations for the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development. It identifies key population and development issues of concern to the region and policy objectives for the Conference and its follow-up.

The countries and territories that participated in the formulation of the Declaration are: Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

The Permanent Representative would be most grateful if the Secretary-General would issue the Declaration as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 96, and ensure that the Declaration is drawn to the attention of the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Population and Development at its forthcoming session.

ANNEX

PORT VILA DECLARATION ON POPULATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Following the Pacific Islands Leaders Conference in Tahiti in June 1993 and in accordance with the mandate given by the Twenty-Fourth South Pacific Forum in Nauru in August 1993, Ministers and representatives of Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Guam, Kiribati, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Western Samoa met in Port Vila, Vanuatu, from 9 to 10 September 1993 to identify key population and development issues of concern to the region and, on the basis of this, formulated policy positions which Pacific participants can then use during preparations for, at, and in the follow-up to the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

PREAMBLE

We, the Ministers and representatives at this Meeting on Population and Sustainable Development,

Reviewing the progress made by Governments of the Pacific region in implementing the recommendations and achieving the goals of the World Population Plan of Action,

Addressing ourselves to the theme of the Meeting, "Population and Sustainable Development",

Emphasising the uniqueness of our region as reflected in:

- the central role of custom and tradition;
- the strong affinity of our people with the land;
- our vulnerability to natural disasters;
- the unique challenges we face as a consequence of our history and geography, including widespread dispersal across the largest ocean in the world,

Acknowledging the efforts being made by countries and territories of the Pacific region to promote social and economic development, and the commitment and leadership they have shown in the formulation and implementation of programmes to address population issues and problems,

Recognising the extensive efforts being made at the regional and international level to ensure continued interest and understanding among policy-makers, planners, administrators, and those affected by their decisions, in the area of population and development,

Noting in particular the objectives of the World Population Plan of Action, the Bali Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development, the Jakarta Plan of Action on Human Resource Development and Agenda 21,

Identifying the following key population and sustainable development issues:

- sustained economic growth
- provision of and improvements in the delivery of adequate social services, infrastructure support and jobs to meet the needs of a growing and youthful population
- integrated national development plans and policies that take social and cultural factors into account
- rural and outer island development
- changing patterns of production, consumption and trade and their implications for development
- external assistance that supports national development
- management and conservation of resources
- population and environment linkages
- improved research, analysis and information on population issues to promote better understanding of population trends and developments
- linkages between the enhancement of the role and status of women, family planning programmes and population dynamics
- integrated population policies and programmes,

Further recognising the invaluable contributions of donor countries, multilateral agencies and non-governmental organisations in the provision of technical and financial assistance for population programmes in the Pacific region,

Mindful that, despite the diversities and differences in our social, economic and political conditions as well as our cultural and religious values, the countries and territories of the Pacific share certain common concerns in regard to population and

development,

Noting the importance of peace and stability in achieving social and economic development goals,

Mindful also of the vital importance of a clear and consistent level of political support and sustained commitment to the effective implementation of population and development policies and programmes,

Reaffirming the need for closer cooperation and collaboration amongst the countries and territories of the Pacific region, regional and international organisations, non-governmental organisations and governments in their efforts to address and solve the problems of absolute or relative poverty where it exists, health and nutrition, population and the environment and to accelerate the social and economic well being of their people,

Adopt the Port Vila Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development as our statement of commitment towards addressing the issues of population and sustainable development, and as a regional contribution to the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development and its preparations.

PRINCIPLES

The following principles are considered to be appropriate in the Pacific region in terms of population and sustainable development.

(a) Sustainable development, conservation and preservation of the environment are essential for human beings to enjoy a productive and healthy life.

(b) The right to development entails meeting the needs of present generations in a sustainable manner without compromising the needs of future generations.

(c) Population and development issues and problems differ from country to country and solutions to these must depend on and be found within the context of the specific social, cultural and economic priorities and needs of each country and territory.

(d) The process of the formulation and implementation of population and development programmes, policies and development plans are the absolute right and responsibility of each country and territory. To promote a higher quality of life for all people, unsustainable patterns of production and consumption should be substantially reduced through appropriate policies. External technical and financial assistance may be required to complement such efforts.

(e) Access to safe and effective family planning services is a basic human right. Informed choice and access to a range of affordable family planning methods and

services must be assured for all; coercion must play no part in population policies and programmes.

(f) Population and sustainable development programmes, to be effective and successful, must be sensitive to local values, involve male and female decision makers at all levels, and ensure the full participation of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and, where appropriate, the private sector.

(g) Population and sustainable development programmes, to be successful, need to fully respect and protect the rights of individuals and accordingly should ensure the elimination of all forms of discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, age, disability, social class and religion.

(h) Efforts to address development and population related problems are the primary responsibility of each country and territory; external technical and financial assistance may be required to complement such efforts;

(i) Population and development issues and problems are interrelated; there is a need to integrate population issues into mainstream economic development planning systems.

THE PACIFIC CONTEXT

The Pacific region is characterised by small land masses dispersed over vast areas of the world's largest ocean with a combined Exclusive Economic Zone three times larger than the United States of America or China but with a land area accounting for less than 2% of that total.

As with many other island developing countries and territories, development is frequently constrained by small domestic markets, narrow resource and production bases, high unit costs of infra structure, heavy dependence on external aid and remittances and vulnerability to external economic shocks and natural disasters.

The region is geographically, ecologically and socio-culturally diverse. However, all countries and territories share a strong affinity with and dependence on land and ocean resources for their livelihood, resources which are coming under increasing pressure due to continuing high population growth, expanding economic activity and natural disasters.

The consequences of the complex relationship between population, development, social and cultural factors and the environment are evident: urban drift, scarcity of land, deterioration of the environment, unemployment, deterioration in law and order, lack of educational opportunities, inadequate health facilities and services, teenage pregnancy, diseases caused by changes in dietary patterns and lifestyles, the erosion of traditional culture and kinship systems and the increasing incidence of sexually transmitted diseases.

To effectively manage the complex relationship between population, development and the environment in the Pacific, particular attention needs to be focussed on land availability, food security, employment generation, access to natural resources, and reproductive rights and responsibilities. It is also necessary to take into account the many strengths which our societies and cultures bring to population and sustainable development challenges. In addressing these issues the active co-operation and participation of all sectors of our communities will be crucial.

THE INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POPULATION, SUSTAINED ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

(a) The relationship between population, development and environment

We recognise that at both the national and regional levels population issues must be integrated into the formulation and implementation of all policies and programmes relating to economic and social development and the environment. To that end, we encourage governments to strengthen existing institutional machineries; and consider the establishment or identification of a Ministry or other unit responsible for population and planning, a planning advisory body to play an advocacy role and appropriate and effective macro-economic planning framework.

In this regard we note that such integration must be comprehensive in its coverage and be a component of annual, strategic and longer-term planning.

We also recognise that such efforts depend for their success on continued political commitment.

(b) Population and economic development

In recognition that the region's population growth rate, exceeding 2% per annum, continues to outpace economic growth in many Pacific countries, we reaffirm the need for population growth and sustainable economic development to be in balance; inadequate economic growth cannot, in the face of growing population, provide the necessary quality of life for the peoples of the region.

In view of the situation in many Pacific island countries and territories, it is essential for both short and long term population issues to be addressed and integrated into the planning processes. It is also important for economic planning to address basic needs of housing, health, education and quality of life.

(c) Population and environment

Environmental change brought about by increased populations, technological change and economic activities have direct consequences on the quality of life for people, including their culture and traditions.

These interactions are particularly immediate in the Pacific islands and the critical

issue is not just how many people can live in a place but also

- the economic base supporting the technologies they employ;

- the extent to which their lifestyles and economic practices consume resources, generate wastes, and are at odds with good environmental management; and

- the degree to which access to resources is unequal.

Recalling the South Pacific Forum's continuing concerns about a wide range of environmental issues, including nuclear testing and the ocean dumping of radioactive and other wastes, we support the implementation of policies that will minimise severe ecological damage and its health and welfare repercussions. This requires:

- better knowledge of the relationships between population, culture and environment in the region;

- support to develop the institutional capacity in the region to conduct the necessary research and policy analysis;

- administrative systems which recognise and assist inter-sectoral planning;

- the inclusion of projected demographic trends and imputed consumption patterns in planning;

- political commitment to be given to policies that will slow population growth, rationalise population distribution, alleviate poverty, reduce environmentally dangerous production and consumption, and foster the use of appropriate technologies.

We recognise that changes to the global climate would be of fundamental importance to the peoples, countries and territories of the Pacific Island region. The causes of such changes have their origins far from our region and are beyond the control of our countries and territories. We reiterate, however, our major concern that the repercussions of global climate change and resultant sea level rise will involve, at an early stage, serious economic and social consequences not only for the small low lying islands of the region but also for the coastal zones of other Pacific islands.

We accordingly call on the international community to give full recognition to these vital concerns including the possibility of their total inundation and to take the necessary actions and to commit itself to the alleviation of possible economic,and social impacts of sea level rise on the islands of our region.

We recognise also other aspects of climate change which can be expected to have

major significance for the sustainable economic development of countries and territories of our region, including high altitude areas, and the need for alleviation of possible economic and social impact to be considered by the international community.

We note that the present high vulnerability of Pacific island populations to natural disasters is likely to further increase as a consequence of climate and technological change and recommend that

- governments promote better management of the current hazards and evaluate development projects for their impact on the environment and their susceptibility to natural hazards; and

- commitment be given to developing disaster mitigation measures, including better land use regulation and community preparedness arrangements.

GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Recalling the various plans of action and conventions for the full, equal and beneficial integration of women in all development activities, we recognise

- the central role of Pacific women in the development process both as active participants and as beneficiaries;

- women's significant contribution to national development despite the continued existence of barriers to their full participation; and

- the fundamental links between the achievement of sustainable development, population change and improvements in the status of women and the quality of family life;

- the need to remove all forms of legal discrimination against women and to ratify the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

We note the joint roles and responsibilities of men and women in reproduction and recommend that:

- population issues cannot be separated from the issue of improving the social, economic, political and legal status of Pacific women;

- for sustainable development to occur there must be genuine gender equality and equal access to and participation in all development activities, particularly education and training, employment and health care;

- population policies and programmes must involve measures to empower women, eliminate gender bias, ensure that women are fully integrated in

the development process as equal partners in policy making, planning and programme implementation, and be focussed on ensuring equal access to education and employment; and

- specific programmes which provide access to financial resources and of family planning services be ensured.

We recommend that governments assess the impact of macro-economic policies, particularly the impact of structural adjustment policies on potentially vulnerable groups, among which women are over represented.

POPULATION GROWTH AND STRUCTURE

(a) Diversity of fertility, mortality and population growth rates

In mid-1993 the population of Pacific Island developing countries is estimated to be approximately 6.3 million. Within the region, whose annual growth rate at 2.3% is in the higher range by world standards, countries vary between a temporary high of 9.5% in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and 4.2% in the Marshall Islands to negative growth in Niue. Among the countries approximating the regional rate are Papua New Guinea, Palau and French Polynesia. Generally, mortality is declining, but by general developing country standards life expectancy still ranges from levels that are relatively low to relatively high. While fertility rates are declining in most countries and territories they are still higher than in some other developing countries. Additionally, most Polynesian and some Micronesian countries and territories have experienced heavy out-migration to Pacific Rim neighbours. Consequently, while projected rate of natural increase are high across the region, in Polynesia and some parts of Micronesia this has been counter balanced by emigration. However, certain areas in Micronesia have experienced substantial population growth as a result of inward migration.

(b) Children, Youth and the Aged

Within the context of population and sustainable development the rapidly increasing numbers at childhood, adolescence and young working ages are a major challenge. For at least the next few decades, this feature of population structure will give rise to heavy demands on the labour market and on all social services, diverting scarce financial resources from capital investment to current expenditure. While Pacific countries and territories are proportionately "young" by international standards, older age groups within all Pacific countries are growing rapidly. We recognise that these trends will have long term implications which we must commit ourselves to addressing now. Innovative and effective macro-economic strategies will therefore have to be introduced to create new jobs for the expanding labour force, especially as unemployment, and related problems, such as crime and poverty will place heavy demands on public sector services.

We must be particularly aware of the needs of those in older age groups who have contributed so much to our communities and who must be assured of security and dignity in their later years.

In recognition of these and other challenges associated with population growth and structure, we acknowledge the particular needs and requirements of such exposed and vulnerable groups as children, youth, the aged, and the disabled. In this regard we reaffirm the 1992 South Pacific Forum's statement on the "State of Pacific Children" which recognised the responsibility we have to ensure that children are able to grow and develop to their full potential, as well as to be supportive of families and communities in their efforts to nurture and guide children. We recognise that especially during periods of economic austerity, our governments and administrations will need to protect children's well-being by continued adequate support for essential health and educational services for children, in particular, primary health care and education.

We also welcome the decision of the South Pacific Conference to have as its 1993 Conference theme, "Pacific Children".

(c) **Indigenous People**

We welcome the opportunity to affirm the importance of the perspective of indigenous people to our region during this the International Year for Indigenous People. We recall and affirm the commitments made at meetings of the South Pacific Forum, most recently the twenty fourth meeting held in Nauru in August 1993, and welcome the proposed convening of a regional conference on indigenous people's concerns.

THE FAMILY, ITS ROLE AND COMPOSITION

We acknowledge the centrality of the Pacific Island family in the pursuit of material and non-material well-being. In the context of the continuing salience of tradition, the demands of modernity, the importance of the subsistence sector, and the composition of our populations, it is the Pacific Island family which sits at the nexus of tradition and modernity, and makes a vital contribution to socio-economic development and to personal well-being. Given the large number of children and the growing number of older persons, this crucial role is all the more important because the family is a mechanism by which we seek to achieve inter-generational equity.

We recognise that family planning is beneficial to the whole family, and therefore does not conflict with traditional Pacific family concepts, functions and roles but rather enhances this basic social unit. From this standpoint, we consider family planning to be a means of improving quality of family life and not an end in itself.

We note with real concern therefore that the Pacific Island family is coming under growing pressures, amongst which can be counted the geographical dispersion of family members induced by internal and external migration, and the increasing economic and

social costs of meeting family and traditional obligations.

We urge that action be taken to address these issues and request governments, non-governmental organisations and other agencies to undertake appropriate activities in 1994 to mark the International Year of the Family, and to continue these actions beyond that year.

We also emphasise that population policies and programmes should give publicity to the role of family planning in enhancing the quality of family life.

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS, REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING

Fertility rates are relatively high in most Pacific countries and territories for such reasons as health status, cultural beliefs and the perceived economic security which comes from large families. All Pacific countries and territories have in place MCH/FP programmes and/or policies to meet the needs of their communities and which are supported by the international community.

In the region MCH/FP programmes should address the following needs:

- to reduce the relatively high levels of maternal mortality;
- to reduce the relatively high levels of infant mortality;
- to improve information on and access to contraceptive methods to increase contraceptive prevalence with informed consent.
- to improve adolescent health, with special reference to fertility where applicable;
- to increase accessibility to and availability of safe, affordable, culturally and socially acceptable MCH/FP services;

Rates for each of these aspects vary between and within countries, as do short- and medium-term specific national targets. We would encourage adoption of the criteria for unmet needs for family planning services which are based on health risks and the principles of safe motherhood initiatives. These include births by mothers who are too young or too old, and those which are too close or too numerous

We acknowledge with appreciation recent declines in infant and childhood mortality achieved in some parts of the region. At the same time the success in improving the survival of our children and the continuing high levels of fertility in many parts of the region has meant that many Pacific families are facing an increasingly heavy burden of inter-generational dependency.

We acknowledge that the successes achieved in improving child survival have yet to be matched by similar achievements in reducing fertility.

We accordingly stress the urgent need for an intensification of MCH and family planning programmes. In this context we note that in some cases insufficient information and counselling can act as a significant barrier to the desire for family planning, and therefore there is a need for information programmes to pay special attention to addressing gaps relating to information on human reproduction and the side effects of contraception.

Thus each family planning programme should be specific to the needs of the people it serves across the Pacific region. We recognise that for the success of family planning programmes in the region the following considerations are essential:

- increased male involvement in, and recognition and acceptance of, the reproductive rights and responsibilities of men;
- partnership between governments and non-governmental organisations in the formulation and implementation of family planning services;
- community involvement, including participation of political, traditional and religious leaders;
- strengthening the first levels of referral both in terms of physical and human resources;
- integration with other areas of health planning and service delivery;
- positive commitment by governments;
- regular review, assessment and evaluation of progress and identification of unmet needs;
- counselling and information, including family life and health education in schools;
- increased coordination and collaboration among agencies and organisations, including donors, involved in family planning programmes.

HEALTH AND MORTALITY

Across the region a wide range of mortality rates prevail, from levels of life expectancy which are low by developing country standards to those that are relatively high. We have identified maternal, infant and early childhood concerns as particularly important. Moreover, the challenges produced by the shift from traditional patterns of production and consumption and the increasing prevalence of diseases related to life styles

is also an issue of major concern for Pacific Island countries and territories.

We note that maternal mortality is a significant cause of death among women of child-bearing age in the region. Thus, we

- reaffirm the commitment of many of our governments, given at the Amsterdam Forum and the World Summit for Children, to reduce the maternal mortality rate by half by the year 2000.

Specifically, we commit ourselves to achieve a rapid and substantial reduction of maternal morbidity and mortality, by

- taking the necessary steps to provide family planning knowledge and services to all men and women with the goal of improving the contraceptive prevalence rate;

- reducing the incidence of pregnancies among adolescents and older women, and pregnancies which are too frequent or too numerous birth;

- providing all pregnant mothers with comprehensive ante natal and post natal care; and

- providing adequate care by trained personnel at delivery, and, in the event of complications, by ensuring that appropriate referral services are accessible.

We also reconfirm the commitment already given at the Amsterdam Forum and World Summit for Children, to reduce infant and early childhood mortality rates; and we dedicate ourselves to bring down infant and early childhood mortality rate by the year 2015 in accordance with specific quantifiable goals.

These mortality reduction targets require clear and attainable health goals, a number of which we identify:

- to continue the commitment to immunisation, control of diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory infections;

- to encourage and assist women to breast feed their infants in the interests of both the mother and the child;

- to reduce the incidence of low birth weight babies by providing adequate attention to maternal nutrition and infectious diseases;

- to prevent and treat STDs, with special reference to AIDS prevention;

- to take adequate measures to prevent and to treat diseases such as diabetes and heart diseases which are becoming increasingly prominent with changes in life styles; and

- to encourage governments to ratify and implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION, URBANISATION AND INTERNAL MIGRATION

Movement of people within countries and territories is an important feature of the region, as is a steady shift of populations from rural to urban areas, particularly from outlying regions and islands to major urban centres.

While the region is currently characterised by low levels of urbanisation, it is experiencing high rates of urban growth and in a number of countries there are also significant population flows towards export production zones. We therefore note the need to develop innovative approaches to such population movements.

In recognising the significance of internal migration and population redistribution, and accepting its inevitability, we acknowledge the importance of addressing the causes and identifying the motivation behind such demographic changes just as we must focus on its impact on areas of origin and of destination. In that task the free movement of people within our countries and territories must be assured. However, we need to address the issues of rural development, equity and food security. Equally we must focus increased attention and resources on rectifying shortcomings in rural services which are often the principal motivation for the rural exodus.

We also acknowledge that additional data on population distribution, migration within our countries and territories and intra-regional migration will be an important factor in a clearer understanding of migration trends and the impacts of population redistribution.

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

Migration between countries and territories of the region, as well as to Pacific Rim countries, is markedly different for each of the three sub-regions of the Pacific. While in Melanesia, apart from New Caledonia, international migration has not been a significant factor, significant levels are being experienced by some Micronesian countries. In the case of Polynesia, relatively high fertility and declining mortality levels have been counterbalanced by emigration, thus producing low or even negative population growth rates.

We recognise both the advantages and disadvantages to countries and territories in the region of international migration. The motivation and causes of significant migration exchanges with Pacific rim countries merits full recognition, as do the changing patterns

of flows of remittances. We also recognise that the directions of current migration streams may change. We also appreciate that migration from our region is contributing to a significant loss of scarce human resources.

We recognise that for many Pacific Island countries and territories, net migration is an important component of population growth and will remain so for the foreseeable future. We are aware of the importance of remittances and other resource transfers between island countries and territories and Pacific Rim countries as a consequence of migration. We are also conscious of the role played by Pacific Island migrants in the development of Pacific Rim economies and seek to ensure that Pacific Island countries and territories and Pacific Rim countries conduct migration policies to their mutual benefit in a stable and transparent manner. In addition, we are mindful of the impact of migration into the territories of our region and accordingly urge administering powers to respect the wishes of the local populations.

PROMOTION OF POPULATION INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

The effective implementation of population and sustainable development policies and programmes is, in large part, dependent on the free flow of information, including that designed and produced within the region, to all sections of the Pacific Island community and the education of new generations.

There is a need for continued development of information, education and communication activities to promote family planning programmes and increase public awareness on the wide range of population issues. We recognise the need to

- adopt culturally appropriate methods to improve the knowledge and understanding of men, women, youth and adolescents about population and reproduction;

- increase the participation of community organisations, NGOs and other bodies in the dissemination and mobilisation of public support for family planning and health promotion;

- strengthen existing national communication capacities in support of family planning programmes;

- undertake research, pre-test and disseminate communication materials, utilise indigenous forms of communication, and develop support services systems for community outreach programmes; and

- use the mass media as well as informal communications for the dissemination of information.

The Pacific Population Information Network (POPIN), presently established in eight of the Pacific Island countries, should be extended to include others in the region. POPIN has the potential to strengthen national population information systems in the collection of information both intra-sectorally and inter-sectorally, and to further assist population studies through research into specific areas to be identified at national and regional levels.

CAPACITY-BUILDING

Limited human, technical and financial resources is a fundamental constraint to the integration of population and development in decision-making in most Pacific Island countries and territories. This may also be compounded by inappropriate institutional and financial arrangements.

This is reflected in the relative lack of quality and timely statistics and the difficulties experienced by many countries and territories in adequately addressing population and sustainable development needs. Without such information, the integration of population considerations into development planning is hampered.

This lack of information inhibits conclusive statements on population trends. This then limits the capacity to effectively forecast education, health services needs and the future demand for employment. Thus we support the need for national and regional efforts in training, including to:

- ensure that more research on demographic processes is undertaken;
- improve and monitor demographic data collection to allow a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of population processes; and
- provide more timely analysis and dissemination of population statistics and demographic data.

We recognise that there is an urgent need for decision-makers to address population, economic and social concerns in a systematic and integrated way. The preparation of national population plans and policies, both short and longer term, is an important step. These should include issues of education and training; human, physical and financial resource requirements; legislation; and the essential and appropriate administrative infrastructure for effective decision-making.

We recommend that the integration of population and environmental issues into planning should become an integral part of development planning in the region. To assist planners to undertake such new responsibilities, appropriate training needs to be provided to meet individual country needs.

TECHNOLOGY, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

The notion of sustainable development includes questions of technology. In this context technology can be viewed as having multiple dimensions.

In an effort to ensure sustainable development and maximise the use of available national resources in the region there is a need to maximise efforts to identify appropriate technology and ensure its development and adaption. This requires comprehensive research into the use of available resources in the region.

We thus urge continued international support for cost- effective and appropriate technologies, including architecture for housing in line with traditional values, further development of the use of plant life and other products for use in medicines, development of more appropriate cooking stoves, and higher quality potable water.

NATIONAL ACTION

We reaffirm the primacy of action at the national level in population, economic growth and sustainable development activities, while recognising the significant contribution of regional collaboration and international cooperation.

National action requires, in the first instance, the formulation of comprehensive population and development policies and the design of integrated plans and programmes of action to address the complex but interrelated issues of population and sustainable development. We urge governments to make firm commitments for the achievement of policies and programmes, and recommend that at least 20 per cent of public expenditure be allocated to social sector development programmes.

To ensure the effectiveness of national action, we encourage adoption of an integrated programmatic approach that would promote close linkages between project activities, sectoral programmes and national policies. This should be facilitated by the establishment of national and local planning and coordinative mechanisms and the mobilisation of various institutional and social groupings to ensure sustained action.

An important consideration for direct and concerted societal action is the establishment of clear, short and long term national goals for population, economic growth and sustainable development, especially in the areas of human resources development and the availability and access to MCH/FP services.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

The development of national and regional programmes to promote population and sustainable development will require the continued provision of external technical and financial assistance for the foreseeable future and, in particular for the most vulnerable countries and territories in the region. In this regard we recognise the vital role of regional collaboration and international cooperation.

Attention is given to the need for international development agencies, donor organisations and partner countries to act in a coordinated manner to promote the attainment of policies and goals of the countries and territories of the region. In this regard we note with appreciation the efforts of all international agencies and donor organisations and encourage them to continue to cooperate with relevant regional organisations in full conformity with the wishes of the countries and territories of the region in coordinating population assistance within the overall context of sustainable development activities.

We particularly stress the need for continued full and close cooperation between regional organisations where issues of a cross-sectional and interrelated nature such as population and development are concerned.

We welcome additional support for population-related programmes from the donor community and view this as timely recognition of the central place of population concerns within sustainable development.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL SECTORS

We recognise the important contribution of the many and varied non-governmental groups which are active within the countries and territories of the region.

Such groups, which are in most cases drawn from the community and know most directly the needs of their people, are acknowledged as making a vital contribution to the quality of life in many sectors. We agree that close cooperation between governments and the non-governmental sector needs to be further encouraged, including, wherever possible, by the involvement of NGO representatives in discussions of population and development priorities and programmes.

We support the proposed involvement of non-governmental representatives from the South Pacific in the preparations for the International Conference on Population and Development and hope that the necessary financial assistance can be provided to enable representative NGOs from the region with direct relevance to the Cairo Conference to prepare for and attend it and the final preparatory session in April 1994.

We further welcome the suggestion that NGOs from the region hold a briefing workshop prior to the April 1994 session of the ICPD Preparatory Committee and call on the international donor community to assist in the funding of such a gathering.

PREPARATIONS FOR AND FOLLOW-UP TO THE CONFERENCE

We agree that, while full and active involvement in preparations for the Cairo Conference and high level attendance at it would be most important for the countries and territories of the region, the real significance of South Pacific efforts in the area of population and sustainable development lies in the actions set in motion to follow the

1994 International Conference on Population and Development.

We therefore agree that throughout the remainder of the preparatory process for the 1994 Conference the countries and territories of the region, together with regional organisations and institutions, continue to cooperate and collaborate to ensure the most effective recognition of those aspects of the Conference's mandate of direct relevance to the region.

We call on the Forum Secretariat, South Pacific Commission, the South Regional Environment Programme, the Pacific Islands Development Programme and other relevant regional institutions to continue to work closely and collaboratively on all aspects of population and sustainable development. In order to ensure that a specific regional agency takes the role of coordination, we call on the Forum Secretariat to take this role, including during the lead-up to the Cairo Conference in close collaboration with other relevant regional organisations.

We acknowledge the assistance provided by the United Nations Population Fund and other international and regional organisations and donors, and urge their continued involvement in population and sustainable development activities.

In adopting this Declaration at Port Vila, Vanuatu, on 10 September 1993, we, the Ministers and representatives of the Pacific region, commit ourselves, our countries and territories to seek to ensure its immediate and ongoing implementation.

Port Vila, Vanuatu
10 September 1993